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A  
L E T T E R

FROM THE  
NOBILITY, BARONS, AND COMMONS OF SCOTLAND,  
IN THE YEAR 1320,

YET EXTANT UNDER ALL THE SEALS OF THE NOBILITY,

DIRECTED TO

POPE JOHN:

WHEREIN THEY DECLARE THEIR FIRM RESOLUTIONS TO ADHERE TO THEIR KING ROBERT THE  
BRUCE, AS THE RESTORER OF THE SAFETY AND LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE, AND AS HAVING  
THE TRUE RIGHT OF SUCCESSION: BUT WITHAL, THEY NOTWITHSTANDING DECLARE, THAT  
IF THE KING SHOULD OFFER TO SUBVERT THEIR CIVIL LIBERTIES, THEY  
WILL DISOWN HIM AS AN ENEMY, AND CHOOSE ANOTHER  
TO BE KING, FOR THEIR OWN DEFENCE.

*Translated from the Original, in Latine,*

AS IT IS INSEET BY SIR GEORGE MCKENZIE, OF ROSEHAUGH, IN HIS OBSERVATIONS ON PRECEDENCY, ETC.

EDINBURGH: RE-PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1689.

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Of the 284 Popes, from Peter, who died A. D. 66, down to Pius IX., in 1861, there were no less than 23 of the name of John. The one to whom this letter was addressed was the 22d, and he died in A. D. 1334.

## A LETTER

From the Nobility, Barons, and Commons of Scotland, in the year 1320, yet extant under  
all the Seals of the Nobility, &c.

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**S**ANCTISSIMO Patri in CHRISTO ac Domino, Domino *Joanni*, Divinâ Providentiâ Sacrosanctæ Romanæ & Universalis Ecclesiæ summo Pontifici, Filii sui humiles & devoti, *Duncanus* Comes de Fyfe, *Thomas* Rannlphi Comes Moraviæ, Dominus Manniæ, & Vallis Anandiæ, *Patricius* de Dumbar, Comes Marchiæ, *Malisius* Comes de Strathern, *Malcolmus* Comes de Levenox, *Willielmus* Comes de Ross, *Magnus* Comes Cathaniæ & Orcadiæ, & *Willielmus* Comes Sutherlandiæ, *Walterus* Senescallus Scotiæ, *Willielmus* de Soules Buttelarius Scotiæ, *Jacobus* Dominus de Dowglas, *Rogerus* de Moubray, *David* Dominus de Brechine, *David* de Grahame, *Ingelarmus* de Umfravile, *Joannes* de Menteith Custos Comitatus de Menteith, *Alexander* Frazer, *Gilbertus* de Haiâ Constabularius Scotiæ, *Robertus* de Keith Mariscallus Scotiæ, *Henricus* de Sanctoclaro, *Joannes* de Grahame, *David* de Lindesey, *Willielmus* Oliphant, *Patricius* de Grahame, *Joannes* de Fenton, *Willielmus* de Abernethie, *David* de Weyms, *Willielmus* de Monte sixo, *Fergusius* de Ardrosan, *Eustachius* de Maxwell, *Willielmus* de Ramsay, *Willielmus* de Monte alto, *Alanus* de Moraviâ, *Dovenaldus* Campbell, *Joannes* Camburn, *Reginaldus* le Chen, *Alexander* de Seton, *Andreas* de Lesce-

**T**O our most holy Father in Christ, and our Lord *John*, by the Divine providence, chief Bishop of the most holy Roman, & Universal Church, Your Humble and Devoted sons, *Duncan* Earle of Fyfe, *Thomas* Randolph Earle of Murray, Lord of Mannia, and Annandale, *Patrick* de Dumbar, Earle of March, *Malisius* Earle of Strathern, *Malcolm*, Earle of Lennox, *William* Earle of Ross, *Magnus*, Earle of Cathness, and Orkney, *William*, Earle of Sutherland, *Walter* Steward of Scotland, *William* de Soules, Buttelarius of Scotland, *James* Lord of Douglas, *Roger* de Mowbray, *David* Lord of Brechin, *David* de Graham, *Ingelramus* de Umfravile, *John* de Monteith, Warder of the Countie of Monteith, *Alexander* Frazer, *Gilbert* de Hay, Constable of Scotland, *Robert* de Keith, Marshal of Scotland, *Henry* de Sancto-Claro, *John* de Graham, *David* de Lyndsay, *William* Oliphant, *Patrick* de Graham, *John* de Fenton, *William* de Abernethie, *David* de Weyms, *William* de Monte-sixo *Fergus*, de Ardrosan, *Eustachius* de Maxwell, *William* de Ramsay, *William* de Monte-alto, *Allan* de Murray, *Donald* Campbell, *John* Camburn, *Reginald* le Chene, *Alexander* de Seton,

lyne, & *Alexander* de Straton, cæterique Barones & Libere-tenentes, ac tota Communitas Regni *Scotiae*, omnimodam Reverentiam filialem, cum devotis pedum osculis beatorum. Scimus sanctissime Pater & Domine, & ex antiquorum Gestis & Libris colligimus, quod inter cæteras Nationes egregias, nostra sciz, *Scotorum* Natio, multis Præconiis fuerit insignita; Quæ de majori *Scythia* per mare *Tirennum*, & Columnas *Herculis* transiens, & in *Hispania* inter ferocissimos, per multa temporum Curricula, residens, à nullis quantumcunque Barbaricis poterat alienubi subjugari; Indeque veniens, post mille & ducentos annos à transitu populi *Israelitici*, sibi sedes in Occidente quas nunc obtinet, expulsi Britonibus, & Pictis omnino deletis, licet per *Norwegienses*, *Danos*, & *Anglos* sæpius impugnata fuerit, multis sibi Victoriis, & Laboribus quamplurimis adquisivit; ipsasque ab omni servitute liberas ut priscorum testantur historiae, semper tenuit. In quorum Regno, centum & tresdecem Reges de ipsorum Regali prosapia, nullo alienigena interveniente, Regnaverunt. Quorum Nobilitates & merita, licet ex aliis non clarent, satis tamen patenter effulgent, ex eo quod Rex Regum Dominus **JESUS CHRISTUS**, post Passionem & Resurrectionem suam, ipsos in ultimis Terræ finibus constitutos, quasi primos, ad suam Fidem Sanctissimam, convocavit; Nec eos per quemlibet in dictâ fide, confirari voluit, sed per suum primum Apostolum, quamvis Ordine secundum vel tertium, sanctum *Andream* meritissimum beati *Petri* Germanum, quem semper ipsis præcesse voluit ut Patronum. Hæc autem sanctissimi Patres & Predecessores vestri sollicita mente pensantes, ipsum Regnum & Populum, ut beati *Petri* Germani peculium, multis

*Andrew* de *Lescekyne*, and *Alexander* de *Straton*. And the rest of the Barons and free-holders, and whole community, or Commons of the Kingdom of *Scotland*. Send all manner of filial reverence, with devout kisses, of your Blessed, and happy feet.

Most holy *Father* and Lord, we know, and gather from ancient acts, and records, that in every famous Nation, this of *Scotland* hath been celebrate with many praises: This *Nation* having come from *Sythia* the greater, through the *Tuscan* Sea, and by *Hercules* pillars, and having for many ages taken its residence in *Spain* in the midst of a most fierce people, could never be brought into subjection by any people, how Barbarous soever: And having removed from these parts, above 1200 years after the coming of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, did by many Victories and much toils, obtain these parts in the West, which they still possess, having expelled the *Britons*, and intirely rooted out the *Picts*, notwithstanding of the frequent assaults, and invasions they mett with from the *Norwegians*, *Danes*, and *English*. And these parts, and possessions they have always retained free from all manner of Servitude, and Subjection, as ancient Histories do witness.

This *Kingdom* hath been governed by an interrupted succession of 113 Kings all of our own Native & Royal stock, without the intervening of any stranger.

The true Nobility and Merits of those *Princes* and people, are very remarkable, from this one consideration, (tho' there were no other evidence for it.) That the *King of Kings*, the *Lord Jesus Christ*, after his passion, and Resurrection, honoured them as it were the first, (though living in the outmost ends of the Earth,) with a *Call* to his most holy *Faith*: Neither would our *Saviour* have them confirmed in the *Christian Faith*, by any other Instrument, than his own first Apostle, (tho' in order the second or third.) *St. Andrew* the most worthy Brother of the Blessed *Peter*, whom he would always have to be over us, as our patron, or protector.

Upon the weighty Consideration of these things, our most holy *Fathers*, your Predecessors, did with many great and singular favours and priviledges, fence, and secure this *Kingdom*, and *People* as being the peculiar charge, and care, of the Brother of *St. Peter*: so that our nation hath hith-

favoribus & privilegiis quamplurimis muniverunt. Itaque Gens nostra, sub ipsorum protectione, libera hactenus degnit & qujeta; donec ille Princeps Magnificus Rex *Anglorum Edwardus* Pater istius qui nunc est, Regnum nostrum Acephalum, Populumq; nullius mali aut doli conscium, nec Bellis aut insultibus tunc assuetum, sub amici & confœderati specie, innumerabiliter infestavit; Cujus Injurias, Cædes & violentias, Prædationes, Incendia, Prelatorum Incarcerationes, Monasteriorum Combustiones, Religiosorum Spoliationes, & Occisiones, alia quoque Enormia, quæ in dicto populo exercuit, nulli parcens Ætati aut Sexui, Religioni aut Ordini, nullus scriberet, nec ad plenum intelligeret, nisi quem Experientia informaret. A quibus malis innumeris, ipso juvante qui post vulnera medetur & sanat; Liberati sumus per senerissimum Principem, Regem & Dominum nostrum, Dominum *Robertum*, qui pro populo & Hæreditate suis, de Manibus inimicorum liberandis, quasi alter *Maccabeus*, aut *Josue* Labores & Pædia, Inedias & Pericula, læto sustinuit animo. Quem etiam Divina Dispositio, & juxta Leges & Consuetudines nostras, quas usque and mortem sustinere volumus, juris Successio, & debitus nostrorum Consensus & Assensus, nostrum fecerunt Principem atque Regem. Cui tanquam illi per quem salus in Populo facta est pro nostra Libertate tuenda, tam Jure quam Merita tenemur, & volumus in omnibus adhaerere. Quem, si ab inceptis desistet, Regi *Anglorum* aut *Anglicis* nos, aut Regnum nostrum volens subjicere, tanquam inimicum nostrum, & sui nostrique Juris Subversorem statim expellere niteremur; & alium Regem nostrum, qui ad defensionem nostram sufficet, faciemus: Quia quamdiu Centum vivi

erto lived in freedom and quietness, under their protection, till the *Magnificent King Edward*, father to the present King of England, did under the colour of Friendship, and allyance, or confederacie, with innumerable oppressions infest us who minded no fraud or deceit, at a time when we were without a *King* or *Head*, and when the People were unacquainted with warres and invasions. It is impossible for any whose own experience hath not informed him to describe, or fully to understand, the injuries, Blood, and violence, the depredations and fire, the imprisonments of *Prelates*, the burning, slaughter, and robbery committed upon holy persons and Religious Houses, and a vast multitude of other Barbarities, which that *King* execute on this People without sparing of any sex, or age, Religion, or order of men whatsoever.

But at length it pleased God, who only can heal after wounds, to restore us to Libertie, from these innumerable calamities, by our most *Serene Prince, King and Lord Robert*, who for the delivering of his People and his own Rightful Inheritance from the Enemies hand, did like another *Josua*, or *Maccabeus*, most chearfully undergo all manner of toyle, fatigue, hardship, and hazard. The Divine Providence, the right of *Succession* by the Laws and Customs of the Kingdom, (which we will defend till death) and the due and Lawfull Consent, & Assent of all the People, made him our *King* and *Prince*. To him we are obliged, and resolved to adhere in all things, both upon the account of his right, and his own merit, as being the person who hath restored the people's safety, in defence of their Liberties. But after all, if this *Prince* shall leave these principles he hath so nobly pursued, and consent that we or our Kingdom be subjected to the King or people of England, we will immediately endeavour to expell him, as our *Enemy* and as the *Subverter*, both of his own and our rights, and will make another *King* who will defend our Liberties. For so long as there shall but one hundred of us remain alive, we will never

remanserint, nunquam, *Anglorum* dominio aliquatenus volumus subjugari. Non enim propter Gloriam, Deuitias aut Honores pugnamus, sed propter Libertatem solummodo, quam nemo bonus nisi simul cum vita amittit. Hinc est, Reverende Pater ac Domine, quod Sanctitatem vestram, cum omni Præcum instantiâ, Genu flexis Cordibus exoramus; Quatenus sincero corde, menteque piâ recensentes, quod apud eum ejus vices in terris geritis, non sic pondus, & pondus, nec distinctio Judei & Græci, Scoti aut Anglici, tribulationes & angustias nobis & Ecclesiæ DEI illatas ab Anglicis, paternis oculis intuentes; Regem Anglorum, cui sufficere debet quod possidet, cum olim Anglia septem aut pluribus solebat sufficere Regibus, monere & exhortari dignemini, ut nos Scotos in exili degētes Scotiâ ultra quam habitatio non est, nihilq; nisi nostrum cupientes in pace dimittat. Cui pro nostrâ procurrandâ quiete quicquid possumus, adstatim, nostrum respectu habito, hoc facere volumus cum effectu. Vestra enim interest, Sancte Pater, hoc facere, qui Paganorum feritatem, Christianorum culpis exigentibus, in Christianos sævientem aspicitis, & Christianorum terminos aretari indices: Quare ne quid vestræ Sanctitatis memoriæ deroget, & si, quod absit, Ecclesia in aliqua sui parte vestris temporibus patiatur Eclipsin aut Scandalum, vos videritis. Exhortet igitur Christianos principes, qui, non causam ut causam ponentes, se fingunt in subsidium Terræ sanctæ, propter guerras quas habent cum proximis ire non posse; Cujus impedimenti causa est verior, quod, in minoribus proximis de bellandis, utilitas propior & resistentia debilior æstimantur. Sic quam læto corde dictus Dominus Rex noster, & nos, si Rex Anglorum

give consent to subject our selves to the *Dominion* of the *English*. For it is not *Glory*, it is not *Riches*, neither is it *Honour*, but it is *Liberty* alone that we fight, and contend for, which no Honest man will lose, but with his life.

For these reasons, *most Reverend Father* and *Lord*, We do with most earnest prayers, from our bended Knees and Hearts, beg, and entreat, your *Holiness*, that you may be pleased with a sincere, and cordial piety, to consider, that with *Him*, whose Vicar on Earth you are, there is no respect nor distinction of *Jew*, nor *Greek*, *Scots*, nor *English*, and that with a tender and Fatherly eye, you may look upon the calamities, and straits, brought upon us, and the Church of God by the English, and that you may admonish, and exhort the *King of England*, (who may well rest satisfied with his own possessions, since that *Kingdom* of old used to be sufficient for seven or moe Kings) to suffer us to live at peace in that narrow spot of *Scotland*, beyond which we have no habitation, since we desire nothing but our own, and we on our part, as far as we are able, with respect to our own condition, shall effectually agree to him in every thing that may procure our quiet.

It is your concernment, *Most Holy Father*, to interpose in this, when you see how far the Violence, and Barbaritie of the Pagans is let loose to rage against Christendom for punishing of the sins of the Christians, and how much they dayly encroach upon the Christian Territories. And it is your interest to notice, that there be no ground given for reflecting on your memory, if you should suffer any part of the Church, to come under a scandal, or Eclipse, (which we pray God may prevent) during your times.

Let it therefore please your *Holiness*, to exhort the Christian Princes, not to make the warres betwixt them and their Neighbours, a pretext for not going to the relief of the *Holy Land*, since that is not the true cause of the impediment: The truer ground of it is, that they have a much nearer prospect of advantage, and farr less opposition, in the subduing of their weaker Neighbours. And God (who is Ignorant of nothing) knows, with how much cheerfulness, both our King, and we would goe thither, if the King of *England*, would leave us in peace, and



nos in pace dimittet, illuc iremus; qui nihil ignoret satis novit Quod CHRISTI Vicario totique Christianitati ostendimus & testamur. Quibus si Sanctitas vestra Anglorum relatibus nimis credula, fidem sinceram non adhibat, aut ipsis in nostram confusionem favere non desinat; corporum excidia, animarum exitia, & cætera quæ sequentur incommoda, quæ ipsi in nobis, & nos in ipsis fecerimus, vobis ab Altissimo credimus imputanda. Ex quo sumus & erimus in his quæ tenemur, tanquam obedientiæ filii, vobis tanquam ipsius Vicario in omnibus complacere; ipsique tanquam summo Regi & Judici, causam nostram, tuendam committimus: Cogitatum, nostrum jactantes in ipso, sperantesque finem quod in nobis virtutem faciet, & ad nihilum rediget hostes nostros. Serenitatem & Sanctitatem vestram conservet Altissimus Ecclesiæ suæ sanctæ per tempora diuturna. Datum apud Monasterium de *Aberbrothock* in *Scotia*, sexto die *Aprilis*, Anno Gratiae milesimo trecentesimo vicesimo, Anno vero Regni Regis nostri supradicti, quintodecimo.

we doe hereby testifie and declare it to the *Vicar of Christ*, and to all Christendom.

But, if your *Holyness*, shall be too credulous of the English misrepresentations, and not give firm credit to what we have said, nor desist to favour the English, to our destruction; wee must believe that the *Most High* will lay to your charge, all the Blood, loss of Souls, and other calamities that shall follow on either hand, betwixt us and them.

Your *Holiness* in granting our just desires, will oblige us in every case, where our duty shall require it, to endeavour your satisfaction, as becomes the obedient Sons of the *Vicar of Christ*.

We commit the defence of our cause, to him who is the Sovereigne *King* and *Judge*, we cast the burden of our cares upon him, and hope for such an issue as may give strength, and courage to us, and bring our Enemies to nothing. The *most High God* long preserve your *Serenity*, and *Holyness* to his *Holy Church*.

Given at the Monastery of *Aberbrothock* in *Scotland*, the Sixth day of *April*, in the year of *Grace* M.CCC XX. And of our said King's reign the XV. year.







## A FEW PARTICULARS

CONCERNING

# THE DEATH OF KING ROBERT BRUCE,

Chiefly extracted from Froissart's Chronicle :

To which is added the accidental discovery of his Remains after a lapse of five hundred years.

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In the year 1327, King Robert the Bruce, then lying at the point of death in the Castle of Cardross, called to him from the crowd of chieftains and Barons assembled around his bed, his own dear and especial friend, Sir James Douglas, telling him that since death would prevent him from fulfilling a solemn vow he had made, of warring on the enemies of Christ in the Holy Land, he should die in more ease and quiet if his heart were conveyed thither; at the same time urging upon Sir James the task, and concluding in the following words: "I will, that as soon as I am trepassed out of this world, that ye take my heart out of my body and embalm it; and take of my treasures as ye shall think sufficient for that enterprise, both for yourself and such company as ye will take with you; and present my heart to the Holy Sepulchre; and wherever ye come, let it be known how ye carry with you the heart of King Robert of Scotland, at his instance and desire, to be presented to the Holy Sepulchre." Then all the lords that heard these words wept for pity; and when this Knight, Sir James Douglas, might speak for weeping, he said: "Ah, gentle and Noble King, a hundred times I thank your grace for the great honor that ye do to me, sith of so noble and great treasure ye give me in charge; and, Sir, I shall do with a glad heart, all that ye have commanded me, to the best of my true

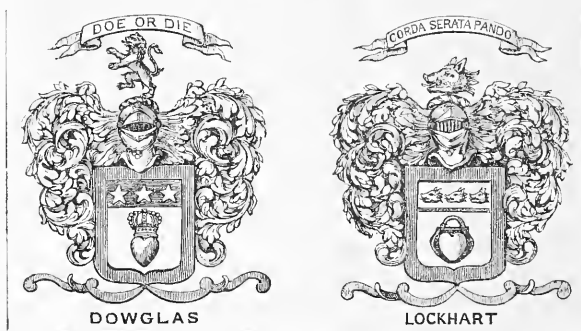
power, howbeit, I am not worthy nor sufficient to achieve such a noble enterprise." Then the King said, "Ah, gentle Knight, I thank you, so that ye will promise to do it." "Sir," said the Knight, "I shall do it undoubtedly, by the faith that I owe to God, and to the order of Knighthood." "Then I thank you," said the King, "for I shall die in more ease of my mind, sith that I know that the most worthy and sufficient Knight of my realm shall achieve for me that which I could never attain unto." And then soon after, this noble Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland, trepassed out of this uncertain world, and his heart taken out and embalmed. His remains were honorably interred in the Abbey of Dunfermline, in the year of our Lord MCCCXXVII, the VII day of the month of November.

In the following spring, Sir James, with the King's heart, enclosed in a silver casket, suspended by a silver chain, and worn around his neck, set forward on his expedition. His train was numerous and splendid as that of a King, having a Knight banneret, seven other Knights, and twenty-six young squires and gentlemen to serve him. All his vessels were of gold and silver; and wherever he stopped, rich wines and spices were served to all who came, according to their degree.

Hearing that Alphonso, King of Spain, was engaged in a war against the Saracen King of

Granada, and thinking that he could not do a nobler deed than war on "Godde's enemies," he determined, before going to Jernsalem, to engage in that enterprise; but advancing too hastily on the enemy, and being unsupported by the Spaniards, he was separated from his companions, and whilst engaged in resening Sir William St. Clair of Rosslyn, found himself so hemmed in as to render escape impossible. Taking from his neck the heart of Bruce, he said, "Pass first in fight, as thou wert wont to do, and Douglas will follow thee or die." He then threw the King's heart among the enemy, and rushing forward to the place where it fell, was there slain with the

greater part of his companions. His body was afterwards found, with the casket lying beneath it. Since that memorable day, the Douglasses have carried upon their shield a bloody heart crowned, and Sir James Lockhard of Lee, who had charge of the Bruce's heart homeward, took for his device a heart with a padlock, his name being changed from Lockhard to Lockheart in memory of this event. The few surviving Knights brought back, also, the remains of the good Sir James Douglas. These last were buried in the Church of Saint Bride of Douglas, and the heart of Bruce beneath the high altar of Melrose Abbey.



Alex. Anderson, Et. sc, Sculp.

## DISCOVERY OF THE GRAVE OF BRUCE IN 1818.

The Illustrious King died on the 5th November 1327, and over his grave, in the Abbey Church of Dunfermline was erected a rich marble monument, executed in Paris. Centuries rolled on, when the Abbey and the monument were ruined, at the time of the Reformation. After the restoration, the place where the tomb had been erected was known only by tradition as the resting place of Bruce. Some years afterwards another church was erected on the same site, and that second building also became a ruin in our own time. But whilst digging among the ruins for the foundation of a third church, in 1818, the workmen whilst engaged among the rubbish of the ancient choir, came upon a substructure of cemented stone, which was evidently the tomb of some person of distinction. It consisted of a large trough of polished stone, about seven feet in length, and eighteen inches in depth. The cover, when first observed, had on it several rings of iron much decayed. It contained the mouldered fragments of a coffin of wood, within which lay a skeleton, wrapped in lead. This was unrolled, and around the head was found a circlet of lead, placed in the form of a crown. The body had originally been wrapped in a damask cloth of exceeding fineness, interwoven with gold, many shreds still remaining. There were also some nails and fragments of wood. The tomb was immediately in front of what had been the high altar of the original Abbey, and among the rubbish was

discovered a small coffin plate, on which were the words,

### ROBERTUS SCOTORUM REX.

The tomb was then closed, and notice sent to the Barons of Exchequer. A day being then fixed for the impressive ceremony, the tomb was re-opened in their presence, and that of a great many persons of distinction as well in literature as art. The royal skeleton, which was in a state of perfect preservation, was then carefully examined, measured, casts taken, and drawings made of it. The length of the skeleton was six feet two inches. The breast bone was found to have been sawn asunder in order to take out the heart! thus conclusively proving that the remains were those of Scotland's most heroic King.

The discovery created a powerful sensation throughout the whole Kingdom, and drew many persons of high rank to the spot. A new marble coffin had been made, and the remains were carefully imbedded in melted bituminous matter, when it was consigned to the tomb with great solemnity. It is now closely and securely preserved by three rows of large flag-stones, fastened together by bars of iron. Several fragments of marble, carved and gilt, were dug from the ruins, in the immediate vicinity where the tomb had been erected, being in all probability portions of the original monument, which had been scattered by the breaking down of the ponderous lead roof of the original Abbey.









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*Andrew Wright**with compliments of**Wm Mangier**New York April 8<sup>th</sup> 1861.*

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